

**PATENT**

App. Ser. No.: 09/835,731

Atty. Dkt. No. ROC920010002US1

PS Ref. No.: IBMK10002

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Previously Presented) A method for processing electronic rebates utilizing a rebate server computer system, the method comprising:

linking a purchase identifier to a purchase of a product, wherein the linking comprises:

receiving, by the rebate server computer system via a network, a request for the purchase identifier from a store computer system connected to the network;

generating, by the rebate server computer system, the purchase identifier for the purchase of the product; and

transmitting, by the rebate server computer system via the network, the purchase identifier to the store computer system;

receiving information, via the network, entered by a user of a user computer system to complete a rebate claim for the purchased product;

verifying the received information to determine whether the received information includes a match to the purchase identifier previously generated by the rebate server computer system; and

accepting the rebate claim from the user if the received information is verified as a valid rebate claim.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the purchase identifier is listed on a receipt upon the purchase of the product.

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5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the purchase identifier is contained in an electronic mail message transmitted from the store computer system to an electronic mail address accessible using the user computer system.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
transmitting an electronic mail message containing the purchase identifier, to an electronic mail address accessible using the user computer system.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
providing a web page, via the network, to the user computer system to enable the receipt of information for the rebate claim.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
verifying whether the rebate claim is a valid request for the rebate.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the verifying comprises:  
determining whether the rebate claim was previously processed.
10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the verifying comprises:  
determining whether a limit of rebates for the product has been exceeded.
11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the verifying comprises:  
determining whether the product was previously returned.
12. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
issuing a check to the user identified on the rebate claim.

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13. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
transferring the rebate electronically to an account of the user identified on the rebate claim.
14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the user computer system comprises one of a personal digital assistant (PDA) device and a personal computer.
15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the network comprises the Internet and the received information is submitted from the user computer using a web browser program.
16. (Previously Presented) A rebate server computer system for processing electronic rebates, the rebate server computer system comprising:  
a memory for storing an electronic rebate program;  
a processor which, upon executing the electronic rebate program is configured to:  
link a purchase identifier to a purchase of a product, wherein the linking comprises:  
receiving, by the rebate server computer system via a network, a request for the purchase identifier from a store computer system connected to the network;  
generating, by the rebate server computer system, the purchase identifier for the purchase of the product; and  
transmitting, by the rebate server computer system via the network, the purchase identifier to the store computer system;  
receive information, via a network, entered from a user of a user computer system to complete a rebate claim for the purchased product;  
verify the received information to determine whether the received information includes a match to the purchase identifier previously generated by the rebate server computer system; and

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accept the rebate claim if the received information is verified as a valid rebate claim.

17. (Previously Presented) The rebate server computer system of claim 16 wherein the memory further stores a http (Hypertext Protocol) server program.

18. (Previously Presented) The rebate server computer system of claim 16 wherein the user computer system comprises one of a personal digital assistant (PDA) device and a personal computer.

19. (Previously Presented) The rebate server computer system of claim 16 wherein the network comprises the Internet and the received information is submitted from the user computer using a web browser program.

20. (Previously Presented) The rebate server computer system of claim 16 wherein the purchase identifier is listed on a receipt upon the purchase of the product.

21. (Previously Presented) The rebate server computer system of claim 16 wherein the purchase identifier is contained in an electronic mail message transmitted to an electronic mail address accessible using the user computer.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium storing a software program that, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method comprising:

linking a purchase identifier to a purchase of a product, wherein the linking comprises:

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receiving, by a rebate server computer system via a network, a request for the purchase identifier from a store computer system connected to the network;

generating, by the rebate server computer system, the purchase identifier for the purchase of the product; and

transmitting, by the rebate server computer system via the network, the purchase identifier to the store computer system;

receiving information, via the network, entered by a user of a user computer system to complete a rebate claim for the purchased product;

verifying the received information to determine whether the received information includes a match to the purchase identifier previously generated by the rebate server computer system; and

accepting the rebate claim from the user if the received information is verified as a valid rebate claim.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Canceled)

27. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the purchase identifier is listed on a receipt upon the purchase of the product.

28. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the purchase identifier is contained in an electronic mail message transmitted from the store computer system to an electronic mail address accessible using the user computer system.

29. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 further comprising:  
transmitting an electronic mail message containing the purchase identifier to an electronic mail address accessible using the user computer system.

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30. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the method further comprises:

providing a web page, via the network, to the user computer system to enable the receipt of information for the rebate claim.

31. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the method further comprises:

verifying whether the rebate claim is a valid request for the rebate.

32. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 31 wherein the verifying comprises:

determining whether the rebate claim was previously processed.

33. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 31 wherein the verifying comprises:

determining whether a limit of rebates for the product has been exceeded.

34. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 31 wherein the verifying comprises:

determining whether the product was previously returned.

35. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the method further comprises:

issuing a check to the user identified on the rebate claim.

36. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the method further comprises:

transferring the rebate electronically to an account of the user identified on the rebate claim.

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37. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the user computer system comprises one of a personal digital assistant (PDA) device and a personal computer.
38. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the network comprises the Internet and the received information is submitted from the user computer using a web browser program.
39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the purchase identifier is a unique identifier utilized only for rebate purposes.
40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the rebate server computer system is operated by a product manufacturer and the store computer system is operated by a retail store.
41. (Previously Presented) The rebate server computer system of claim 16 wherein the purchase identifier is a unique identifier utilized only for rebate purposes.
42. (Previously Presented) The rebate server computer system of claim 16 wherein the rebate server computer system is operated by a product manufacturer and the store computer system is operated by a retail store.
43. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the purchase identifier is a unique identifier utilized only for rebate purposes.
44. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the rebate server computer system is operated by a product manufacturer and the store computer system is operated by a retail store.